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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/987,652	11/15/2001	Yasutaka Nagaoka	Q67305	7453
7590	11/13/2003		EXAMINER	
SUGHRUE, MION, ZINN, MACPEAK & SEAS, PLLC 2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC 20037			MC CALL, ERIC SCOTT	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2855	

DATE MAILED: 11/13/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Advisory Action	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/987,652	NAGAOKA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Eric S. McCall	2855

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

THE REPLY FILED 20 August 2003 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE. Therefore, further action by the applicant is required to avoid abandonment of this application. A proper reply to a final rejection under 37 CFR 1.113 may only be either: (1) a timely filed amendment which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a timely filed Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee); or (3) a timely filed Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114.

PERIOD FOR REPLY [check either a) or b)]

- a) The period for reply expires 3 months from the mailing date of the final rejection.
- b) The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.
ONLY CHECK THIS BOX WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

1. A Notice of Appeal was filed on _____. Appellant's Brief must be filed within the period set forth in 37 CFR 1.192(a), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 1.191(d)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal.
2. The proposed amendment(s) will not be entered because:
 - (a) they raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);
 - (b) they raise the issue of new matter (see Note below);
 - (c) they are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or
 - (d) they present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: _____.

3. Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): _____.
4. Newly proposed or amended claim(s) _____ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).
5. The a) affidavit, b) exhibit, or c) request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: See Continuation Sheet.
6. The affidavit or exhibit will NOT be considered because it is not directed SOLELY to issues which were newly raised by the Examiner in the final rejection.
7. For purposes of Appeal, the proposed amendment(s) a) will not be entered or b) will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.

The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:

Claim(s) allowed: (NONE).

Claim(s) objected to: (NONE).

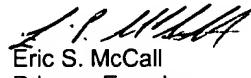
Claim(s) rejected: 1-7.

Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: (NONE).

8. The drawing correction filed on _____ is a) approved or b) disapproved by the Examiner.

9. Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 8.

10. Other: _____.


Eric S. McCall
Primary Examiner
Art Unit: 2855

Continuation of 5. does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: the Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's arguments with respect to the rejection under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, that the Applicant's originally filed drawings clearly support the claimed subject matter in question. The Applicant's drawings show a "column" (4) but are silent to an "upper portion" of the column (as is the Applicant's written disclosure). Thus, the claim that the steering-signal transmitting unit, the turn signal lever, the wiper control switch lever, and the fitted recessed portion are all attached to the upper portion of the column is not clearly supported by the Applicant's drawings because the drawings show that all of the above attachments are attached not to the upper portion of the column, keeping in mind that the Applicant has defined the column as element (4), but in some cases (turn signal and wiper levers) approximated half way between one end of the column and the other end of the column and in some cases (transmitting unit and recessed portion) at what appears to be the bottom of the column. The Applicant has argued that the above attachments are "clearly conveyed and understood as an upper portion of the column". However, the Examiner points out that the Applicant has defined the column as that of element (4), and element (4) does not show all of the said attachments at the upper portion thereof. With respect to the arguments pertaining to the 102(b) rejection, the Applicant has argued novelty by relying on the phrase "upper portion of the column". However, the Examiner points out that (1) the prior art teaches what is interpreted as an "upper portion of the column" for the reasons as previously presented, and (2) the Applicant's relied upon drawings do not show the attachments being at the upper portion of the defined column.